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L Press Guidance
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RELEASED IN FULL

RWANDA: GENOCIDE

Q. Do we avoid legal obligations by saying that acts of genocide may have occurred instead of saying that genocide has occurred?

A. -- NO. A CONCLUSION THAT GENOCIDE HAS OCCURRED IN RWANDA WOULD NOT IMPOSE ANY LEGAL OBLIGATIONS ON THE UNITED STATES. UNDER THE CONVENTION, THE PROSECUTION OF PERSONS CHARGED WITH GENOCIDE IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE WHERE THE ACTS TOOK PLACE OR OF A COMPETENT INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL.

-- PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION MAY ALSO CALL UPON THE COMPETENT UN ORGANS TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO PREVENT AND SUPPRESS ACTS OF GENOCIDE. WITH STRONG SUPPORT BY THE UNITED STATES, UN ORGANS HAVE TAKEN A NUMBER OF ACTIONS. THE SECURITY COUNCIL IMPOSED AN ARMS EMBARGO AND REVISED THE MANDATE OF UNAMIR. THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION HAS DESIGNATED A SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR WHOSE MANDATE INCLUDES INVESTIGATION OF POSSIBLE ACTS OF GENOCIDE.

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